U.S. News and World Report’s 2016 Best Colleges guide ranked Wake Forest University 27th among 280 national universities. Wake Forest has been ranked in the top 30 in the national universities category for 20 consecutive years and was also 27th in last year’s guide.

U.S. News also included Wake Forest in the following rankings:

- 21st among “Most Innovative Schools”
- 27th among “High School Counselors’ Top Picks”
- 30th among “Best Values”

Wake Forest University announced that it will offer undergraduate classes in the Wake Forest Innovation Quarter in downtown Winston-Salem.

WFU has leased space in a former R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. building from Wexford Science and Technology. Wexford is renovating space in the 60 series building, next to the planned home of the Wake Forest School of Medicine, to accommodate classrooms and laboratories for undergraduate science programs by January 2017.

In recognition of 10 years of service to Wake Forest University and the community, the Winston-Salem Journal published a 4,000 word profile of President Nathan Hatch that included interviews with colleagues and friends and insights into a day in the life of Wake Forest’s president. The article highlighted accomplishments of Hatch’s tenure. “We want to be the best face-to-face liberal arts residential community,” Hatch said of the University’s goals. “We want to be the best place for college-to-career transition.”

Two years earlier than projected, Wake Will: The Campaign for Wake Forest has reached the half-billion dollar mark in total campaign commitments and is more than 83 percent toward its Reynolda Campus goal.
$6 million federal grant awarded to Wake Forest

A $6 million grant from the National Institutes of Health will allow researchers to study the effects of exercise and dietary measures on knee osteoarthritis. The grant is the largest ever awarded to Wake Forest University. The team includes Steve Messier, professor of health and exercise science, and associate professors Gary Miller, a nutrition expert, and Shannon Mihalko, a health psychologist. Messier hopes his team can develop a “turn-key” community-based health and exercise program.

The future of American history

College history majors used to study “The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.” Today, perhaps, they should also be studying the decline and fall of history majors. Dean of the College Michele Gillespie, who has been teaching American history since 1990, says, “My students still gravitate toward American history, but they are much more interested these days in seeing that history in a broader world context.”

Pope’s political messages cause some to pick, choose

With the Pope’s visit in September, members of Congress aren’t likely to budge from their entrenched positions even at the urging of a world spiritual leader from a faith that nearly a third of them share. “There’s an interesting irony there. When it comes down to moral issues like termination of pregnancy, their faith has everything to do with it. But when it comes to economic policy they say, ‘I don’t get my economic policy from him,’” noted Lucas Johnston, professor of religion and environmental studies. “They’re saying, ‘My economic values trump my religious values.’”

The changing world of internships and microinternships

Summed up, “virtual internships and micro-internships allow students to prove that they have the skills and experiences employers are seeking, regardless of the time commitment,” said Patrick Sullivan, associate director at the Office of Career Development, in a USA Today story.

Sullivan was also invited to write a piece for Co. Exist, a Fast Company blog focused on groundbreaking innovation. The article offers tips on how students can take advantage of micro-internships while avoiding being taken advantage of by individuals or organizations wanting cheap or free labor.
Searching for moral superstars

While much national media attention focuses on the moral failures of people in the public spotlight, a team of Wake Forest researchers is searching for moral superstars. A $3.9 million grant from the Templeton Religion Trust will fund The Beacon Project, a three-year study to find and define the morally exceptional and better understand how to improve moral character. William Fleeson, a Wake Forest psychologist is leading the project. The Beacon Project research team also includes R. Michael Furr, Eranda Jayawickreme and Christian Miller.

Allan Louden, professor and chair of the Communication Department, has been frequently quoted by many media outlets so far during the political season, most notably with this quip for The Washington Post that got extensive pick up: So, how in the world do you win a debate for losers? “Don’t go,” said Louden. “I’m serious.”

The Princeton Review – known for its many college rankings, admission services, and books that help students choose and get into their dream colleges – released a new book “Colleges That Create Futures: 50 Schools That Launch Careers By Going Beyond the Classroom,” that salutes the colleges best at helping students get out of their dream colleges and into their dream careers. Wake Forest made the list. According to the book’s editors, “The school’s radical rethinking of the college to career experience, veering from the outdated notion of ‘career services’ into a comprehensive and holistic four-year approach, has made it a national leader in this field.”

Politics of refugee crisis

The European Union – and to a lesser extent, the United States – is struggling to come to an agreement about how to cope with tens of thousands of refugees fleeing Syria and other war-torn areas, mostly in the Middle East. “What we’re seeing right now on the borders, what we’re seeing right now in refugee camps, we’re seeing all these instances where noncitizens are really left to cope on their own,” said communications professor Alessandra Von Burg.

Why evangelicals have flocked to Donald Trump

If the Trump juggernaut has otherwise shown few signs of waning, the political power of evangelicals in elections may be entering a new, unsettling era for Republican Party politics. “Overall, the evangelical vote is still important to the Republican base,” wrote Bill Leonard, professor at Wake Forest’s School of Divinity and an expert on contemporary American religious life.
Wake Forest welcomed the class of 2019 when approximately 1,300 first-year students from 43 states and 18 countries moved into their residence halls on South Campus.

Wake Forest is beginning site preparation for a new residence hall on campus for first-year students. The structure will be built on the current site of parking lot H at the intersection of Jasper Memory Lane and Wingate Road near Collins Residence Hall on the southern part of campus. The residence hall will support Wake Forest’s vibrant student residential community with kitchen and study areas on each floor and amenities such as large recreation lounges and media rooms, perfect for gaming tournaments or movie nights.

Police Chief Regina Lawson discussed law enforcement efforts at one of the Triad’s largest universities as part of an ongoing series with police chiefs in the region. Lawson highlighted the collaborative efforts of a student and University Police that led to the swift capture of a local prison escapee, as well as the use of the LiveSafe App to help students report incidents on campus.

This fall, 54 students are participating in a new Wake Forest semester-long study abroad program in Barcelona, Spain, through a partnership with the Autonomous University of Barcelona’s City Center Campuses. The program was developed for students studying business, economics, entrepreneurship, and global trade and commerce.

The fourth annual list of the 101 Best Food Trucks in America included Swizzler Gourmet Hot Dogs based in Washington, D.C., a mobile doggery launched in 2014 by a Wake Forest trio of alumni that includes Jesse Konig, Jack Zimmermann and Ben Johnson. In 2012, as juniors, they invented a new fast food concept – quality hot dogs spiral-cut lengthwise so they could better hold and integrate their toppings, which fall nicely into the grooves – as part of a class project.
Oakes named WFU’s first chief diversity officer

Barbee Oakes, a recognized leader in diversity and inclusion initiatives, was appointed as Wake Forest’s first chief diversity officer. She retains her assistant provost title and responsibilities, developed over her six years in that role. While moving forward with several high-priority goals for this year and beyond, she is also focused on documenting how far Wake Forest has come on diversity and inclusion efforts.

Wilkinson named associate dean for student engagement

Tim Wilkinson is working with community members to strengthen support for student leaders, the events they plan and risks they manage. In September, Wilkinson was nationally recognized with a distinguished service award by the Association of Fraternity/Sorority Advisors for his work in the fraternity and sorority community at Lehigh University.

Davis appointed law school’s executive associate dean for academic affairs

Timothy Davis, a professor at the Wake Forest School of Law, will serve as the law school’s executive associate dean for academic affairs. Davis is the first African American to serve in this role at the law school.

Holmes named associate dean of students for student conduct

As the new associate dean of students for student conduct, Valerie Holmes partners with students, faculty and staff to facilitate Wake Forest’s Student Code of Conduct and develops resources that meaningfully engage students in an exploration of the importance of local citizenship, ethics and integrity.

Adams named director of fraternity and sorority life

Betsy Adams has joined Wake Forest as director of fraternity and sorority life. As part of the Student Engagement unit, Adams will be responsible for overseeing the fraternity and sorority community and will be the primary point of contact for Wake Forest’s Greek undergraduate, alumni, parent and international headquarters partners.
Charlotte woman talks about her actions to take down Confederate flag in SC

More than 1,000 people attended a student-initiated panel discussion in Wait Chapel on Confederate flag symbolism and race relations. Melissa Harris-Perry, a political science professor and executive director of the Pro Humanitate Institute, facilitated the conversation. One of the panelists, filmmaker, singer, and community organizer Bree Newsome brought down the Confederate flag that flew over the State Capitol in Columbia. Other panelists included #BlackLivesMatter movement co-creator Alicia Garza; Katon Dawson, former chairman of the South Carolina Republican Party; and James Ian Tyson, a grassroots organizer arrested alongside Newsome after they removed the flag.

Tar Heel: Reynolds relishes role as first female dean of Wake Forest’s law school

Suzanne Reynolds is part of a wave of female law school deans taking the helm this year, which she calls an “overdue correction.” In 2005, less than 20 percent of law school deans were women, compared with nearly half of the students. But 11 of the 28 new deans hired this summer are women, according to a National Jurist magazine article that highlighted Reynolds, bringing the total to 30 percent. “She is a wonderful mentor and model for our law students, exemplifying the blend of research and practice that distinguishes the school,” President Nathan Hatch said. “With her long history here and her commitment to the school, she was the best choice to move us forward in the right direction.”

How to take advantage of your brain’s hidden productivity powers

“Most people carry around a lot of stuff in their heads that they are trying to keep track of and remember,” said Scott Shafer, associate dean and professor of management at Wake Forest School of Business. Shafer recommends doing a brain dump – getting workflow, ideas, commitments, and to-do lists out of your head and onto a physical list and calendar.

Pope gets push-back on environment

In a story that ran on the front page of the Raleigh News & Observer and received widespread pick-up, journalism program director Justin Catanoso reported on environmental issues in Peru for the Pulitzer Center on Crisis Reporting in Washington, D.C. He wrote: “In Pope Francis’ teaching doctrine on climate change and environmental sustainability, he intertwines nature and the world’s poor. There are few places on Earth where the cry of both is louder than in La Oroya, Peru, one of the world’s most polluted places.”

Sex lives best when couples share childcare duties, survey shows

“This isn’t surprising at all,” said sociology professor Robin Simon. “Any way you look at it, studies have consistently found that egalitarian marriages end up making for more satisfying relationships.”

The Rare Books and Special Collections Archive is home to more than 60,000 volumes. Librarian Megan Mulder said: “Having a comprehensive collection is what is valuable... It’s about building collections to enable research.”

The number one challenge is to remove those who perpetrated the fraud. “This was blatantly unethical, and they knew it was unethical,” said Sean Hannah, executive director of the Center for Leadership and Character at the School of Business.

“Climate change is causing an overall warming trend but different parts of the globe warm at different rates and this is changing the wind,” said Robert Erhardt, an environmental statistician. “Some would interpret this as good news about climate change, but I disagree with that. I would just call it a projected consequence of climate change.”
Fox Sports sets up for long game in U.S. women’s soccer

Fox Sports aired all 52 matches of the tournament from Canada. “With the Women’s World Cup, they’re fighting a little bit of an uphill battle, because we haven’t figured out how to market successfully women’s sports,” said Todd McFall, sports economics professor.

New research by Wake Forest biologists Morgan Burnett and Miriam Ashley-Ross, investigates the archerfish and its sharp-shooting ability, showing for the first time that there is little difference in the amount of force of their water jets based on target distance.

“Ultimately, it’s about whether the fish is going to eat or not that day,” Burnette said.

Church ministry created a track to the black middle class after the Civil War. “One of the first professions available to black people, men in particular, was the clergy,” said religion professor Ronald Neal. “Black ministers created institutions and created church bodies that supported black civil society.”

The Nones – a collection of atheists, agnostics, seekers, unchurched believers and the spiritual-but-not-religious – now make up 23 percent of the U.S. population. “The demands of Sunday on family and society have changed so that people have so many more choices,” said Bill Leonard, a Baptist minister, professor of church history and former dean of Wake Forest’s divinity school.

WAKE FOREST SCHOOL OF LAW

Wake Forest School of Law has launched the Health Law and Policy Program to help consolidate and expand research and educational efforts. Mark Hall, professor at the School of Law and a member of the research faculty at the Wake Forest School of Medicine, is the inaugural director of the program.

Activists and college officials protest controversial campus rape bill

During a hearing in the House of Representatives’ Education and the Workforce Committee, higher education representatives laid out their opposition to the Safe Campus Act, warning it could have a “chilling effect” on rape survivors reporting their assaults.

Vice President for Campus Life Penny Rue served as a witness in the hearing. “Our experience teaches us cops look for violence, for signs of struggle, for weapons – they usually don’t understand the nuances,” she said.
Test-Optional Admissions

George Washington University applicants no longer need to take admissions tests

George Washington University dropped its testing requirement for most freshman admissions, becoming one of the largest and most prominent schools to declare that its applicants don’t have to take the SAT or ACT.

“We find much more value in a student’s accomplishments in four years of high school than in four hours of Saturday testing,” said Martha Blevins Allman, dean of admissions at Wake Forest.

A growing number of schools – about 850 and counting – no longer require applicants to submit their scores. And college officials say that a test-optional policy helps them attract strong applicants that may not have previously applied – including students of color and those from low-income families. While the academic research is mixed, some of the schools that implemented the policy early on have seen big changes in their student bodies. Before Wake Forest made its admission process test-optional for freshmen entering in 2009, about 18 percent of the students were non-white. The following year, the number jumped to 23 percent, and it now stands at 30 percent.

Martha Allman, dean of admissions, said reviewing applications became a truly holistic process after instituting a test-optional policy in 2008. Students can answer more written questions instead of sending in college entrance exam scores, which gives staffers a more in-depth understanding of each applicant.

James M. Dunn, one of Baptists’ most well-known advocates for religious liberty and separation of church and state, died July 4 a few weeks after his 83rd birthday in Winston-Salem. Dunn’s colorful rhetoric and take-no-prisoners approach in defense of liberty earned him the reverence and fury of Baptists across the theological spectrum. Dunn, who taught in Wake Forest’s School of Divinity, was also remembered in a Winston-Salem Journal story.